

WASHINGTON INDEPENDENT WRITERS

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Executive Register

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April 21, 1977

Admiral Stansfield Turner
Director, Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, DC 20505

Dear Admiral Turner:

On June 7, 1976, I wrote to Mr. George Bush on behalf of the Washington Independent Writers and enclosed a resolution adopted by our membership. The resolution noted that according to the final report of the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities the CIA announcement of February 11, 1976, would not apply to "freelance contributors" abroad. The Washington Independent Writers resolution asked that the CIA immediately end its use of independent writers for intelligence purposes.

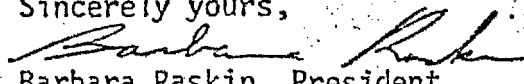
Mr. Bush's reply of July 6, 1976, did not contradict the conclusion of the Senate committee. Instead, he referred to a press report of a meeting between the CIA and a private group, the National News Council, and he enclosed an AP account of this meeting. The AP quoted Mr. Bush as having told the council that freelance writers for American news organizations would not be "hired" by the CIA.

Since a wire service story reporting second-hand what may have been said to a private group cannot, of course, be considered a statement of official policy by the United States government or one of its agencies, we would appreciate a direct statement from you as to whether the CIA's current policy is, or is not, to use independent writers in its intelligence activities and operations.

As matters stand now, the only official statement by a government entity remains the Church committee's report stating that the CIA policy against using journalists does not apply to freelance writers.

We would greatly appreciate clarification of this very important matter now that you have assumed directorship of the agency. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,


Barbara Raskin, President
Washington Independent Writers